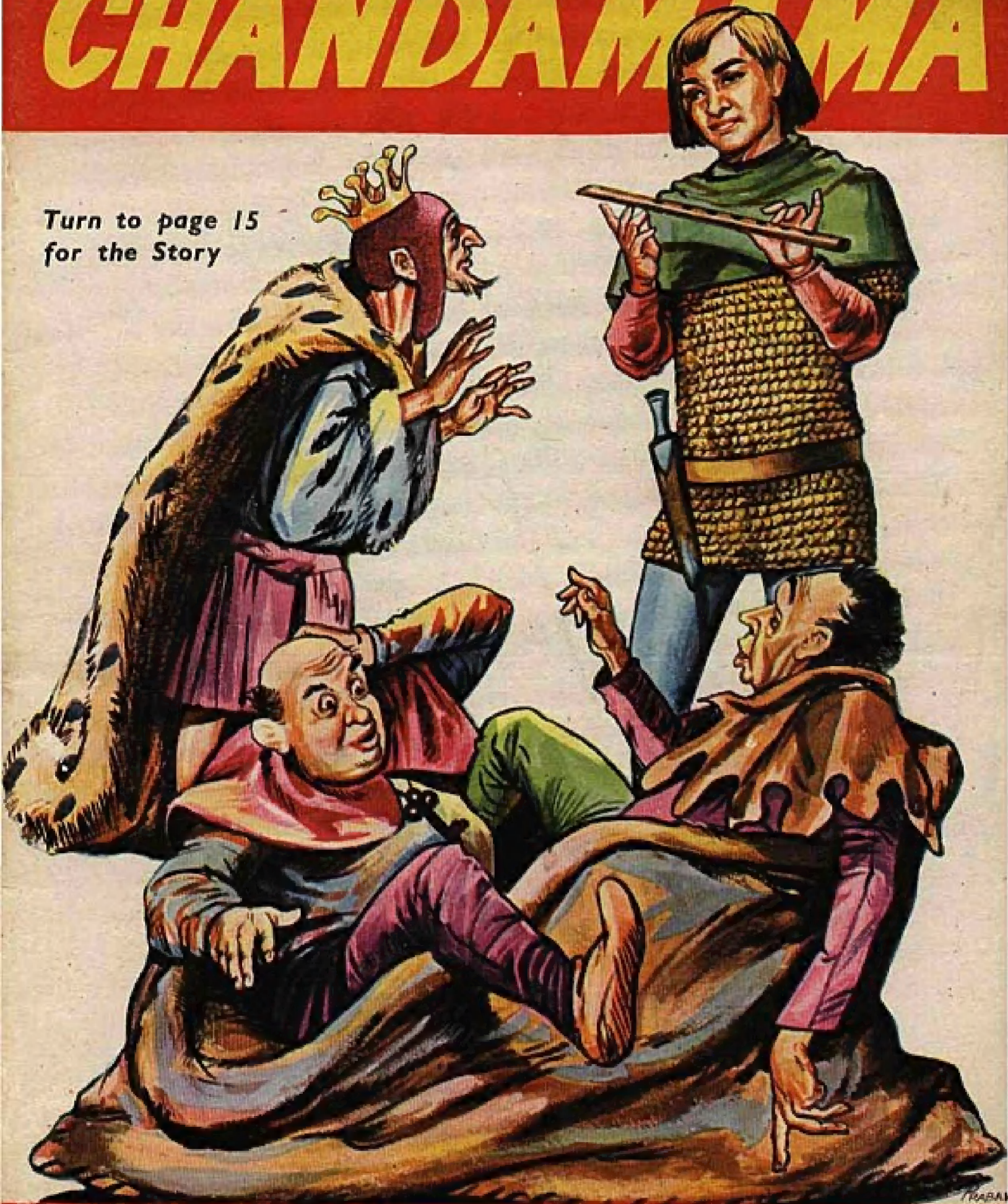


CHANDAMAMA

Turn to page 15
for the Story

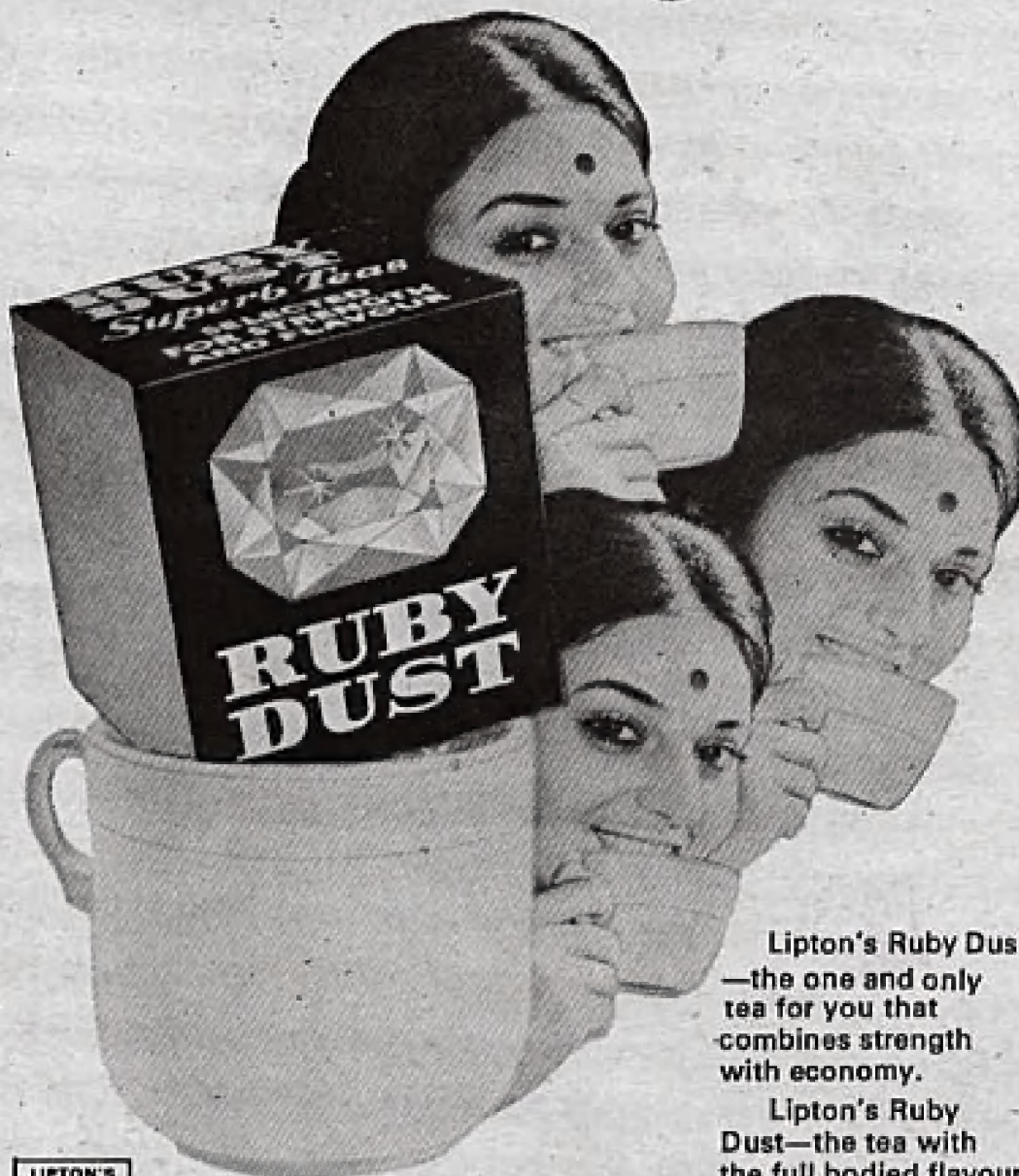


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3 BROTHERS



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THREE RIDDLES

Once upon a time there lived an idle youth named Ananth. He did nothing but roam all day long in the forests eating berries and wild fruits. One day he picked up a peanut from the ground and thought that he would plant this peanut in his own garden. More peanuts would grow and he would sell them for profit. He would even need a ship to export all the peanuts abroad. For that he would have to apply to the King.

Thinking thus he went through the forest, but as ill luck would have it an ogre who lived there, suddenly emerged from a tree and stopped him. The ogre growled menacingly and asked, "Man, where are you going?"

Ananth who was not afraid of the ogre, replied, "Well, I have to export some important things abroad. I am going to the king to ask for the loan of a ship."

The ogre said, "Man, do you see that castle yonder? Well, that's mine. Three days later, I'll come to the king's castle and set you three riddles. If you solve them you can have my castle and all the money in it. If you fail, I'll gobble you up. What do you say?"

Ananth agreed to this and went his way.

Soon he stood before the king and repeated his request. The very boldness of the request impressed the king and he thought Ananth was a rich man who went about in disguise, so

shabby were his clothes. So he asked Ananth, "Fellow, you look so poor from your dress. How can I believe you are a rich man?"

Ananth replied, "Sire, never mind what I wear today. Tomorrow I'll come back in all my finery."

The king could not be satisfied with this reply. He wanted to test him further. So he requested Ananth to stay in the palace that night. Secretly he gave orders for a hard bed, and a rough mattress to be brought into the guest room. Next he ordered his royal spy to watch Ananth while the latter slept.

Next morning the spy reported to the king. "Sire, this young man hardly slept. He kept tossing this way and that on the bed."

The next day, Ananth was made to sleep on a very comfortable satin and soft bed. The spy reported to the king the next morning, "Sire, the young man slept like a top."

The king was now certain that Ananth was an eccentric rich young man. On an impulse he married off his only daughter Shalini to Ananth.

Now what had really hap-

pened was that on the first night Ananth had lost his peanut on which he was going to build his fortune. So he had kept awake the whole night searching for it. The next night he had slept soundly worn out by the previous day's exertions. The king naturally thought that Ananth was a wealthy accustomed to youth luxuries.

Soon after the marriage was over, Ananth remembered the cgre's threat and began to worry about what he would do if the latter turned up at the castle with the riddles.

Noticing his restlessness, the princess asked what ailed him but he did not reply to her. At last the princess called her old





nurse aside and wept her heart out at the strange conduct of Ananth. The old woman promised to help her and went and stood before Ananth.

“What ails you, my young master, that you do not speak to the princess, your wife?”

Then Ananth frankly told her what troubled him.

At once the old woman said, “Is that all? I knew a thousand riddles and more. Let the ogre come. We’ll take care of him.”

Then she bade Ananth remain in a dark room. She bolted the door from inside and waited for the arrival of the ogre.

After three days, at the mid-

night, the ogre came to the palace and knocked on the door behind which stood a trembling Ananth.

“Are you there, man?” asked the ogre.

“Yes, I am in this room, speak out your riddles. If I can’t answer you, break open the door and eat me.”

So the ogre began: “My grandmother covered herself with forty blankets. What does that mean?”

The old woman whispered into Ananth’s ears, and he said, “Oh! you mean the flowers of the plantain tree.”

The ogre admitted that was the right answer. So again he

asked, "Horns it has, but no bullock it be, a howdah it carries on its back, but no elephant it be, so what is it?"

Again the old nurse whispered into Ananth's ears, and he answered clearly, "It is a snail."

The ogre was annoyed that his riddles were being solved so easily. So finally he thundered, "The last riddle for you. I have no mouth, But I answer well. No one can see me, but everyone can hear what I say. So who am I?"

Prompted by the old woman, Ananth declared triumphantly, "Echo."

At once, the ogre split into two and died. All that he possessed went to Ananth.

Then Ananth remembered the ogre's castle and told the king that he would go back home to his palace. The king who was still sceptical about his son-in-



law's real condition accompanied the young couple to their new home. What was his pleasant surprise to discover that Ananth's castle contained treasures which were not to be found in all his kingdom. All his doubts vanished and he was proud of his son-in-law who was certainly the richest man on earth.



WHAT'S YOUR SCORE?

1. What is the capital of Cuba?
2. Where is the Victoria Memorial in India?
3. Which State is called the 'Land of Five Rivers'?
4. Which country is called the 'Land of the Midnight Sun'?
5. Which country in the world is known as the 'Land of Morning Calm'?
6. Which is the biggest museum in the World?
7. Which is the World's tallest statue?
8. Which is the fastest fish in the World?
9. When did the Constitution of India come into force?
10. What is the name of the main International Airport, New York?
11. Who discovered the laws of gravitation?
12. Who invented the Fountain Pen?
13. Who built the first rigid airship?
14. Who is known as the Hockey Wizard?
15. What is the name of the cricket ground at Bombay?

Now Turn to Page 64 and Check your score!

SPOT THE DIFFERENCES

There are ten differences between the two cartoons. Find them out and enjoy for yourself. (Sorry, no clue anywhere in the Magazine.)





THE MAGIC SILVER FISH

Once upon a time there lived in Spain a fisherman named Pedro. He was very poor and lived with his wife in a small wooden hut, close to the sea-shore. He worked very hard to make a living, but he was quite happy. His wife, however, grumbled all day long about how poor they were and what a terrible home they had to live in.

"You must do better at your work," she told Pedro, one morning. "You must catch more and more fish to sell in the market. Then perhaps, we can move from this wooden hut to a cottage made of stone. I am sure we could do it, if only you were not so lazy."

The fisherman sighed. He was not lazy at all. From dawn until dusk, he would stand

on the rocks, casting his line into the sea until his arms ached. The trouble was that there were very few fish around that part of the coast to be caught.

On that day, however, when his wife had grumbled even more than ever, the fisherman threw out his line and at once caught a fish so huge that the rod bent under its weight.

The fish struggled to get free. The fisherman struggled even harder to get it to the shore. At last he was able to do this and to his great surprise, he saw that the great fish was completely silver in colour from its mouth to the tip of its tail.

More to his surprise, was the fact that the fish could speak. "Be kind, fisherman Pedro, I



beg of you," said the fish. "Please let me go and I promise that in return I will give you a great reward, because I am a magic silver fish."

At first, Pedro had no thought of giving up his splendid catch, but after the great silver fish had pleaded again to be let free, he unhooked it and pushed it back into the sea, where it at once swam out of sight.

Pedro went back home and told his wife of this strange adventure. When he got to the part about the fish promising him a reward, his wife said in a shrill voice, "You silly, foolish man. Go back to the seashore at once and ask the fish for a house instead of this wooden hut."

Pedro went back and spoke to the silver fish. "That is not a very big thing to wish for," it said. "Return home and you will see some of my magic."

When he reached home, Pedro was delighted to see his wife sitting at the front door of a pleasant-looking house.

For some days she was satisfied with her new home, but one morning, she started grumbling again. "This is not really enough," she told her fisherman husband. "What I really wan-



ted was a castle and servants to work for me. Go at once and tell the big fish so."

Poor Pedro had to return to the shore, call the fish and explain his wife's new wish. The magic silver fish just waved one of its fins and replied, "Your wish is granted, fisherman Pedro. Return home and you will see."

When Pedro returned, he found his wife taking a walk in the beautiful grounds of a splendid castle, with tame peacocks fluttering all around her.

By next day, the wife was tired of the castle and made Pedro go to the silver fish with a demand that she be made a Queen in a royal palace. The fish, agreeing, said, "Very well, your wish is granted. Go back and see."

On returning, Pedro found instead of a castle, a marvellous

palace with turrets and towers. In a grand hall, he found his wife sitting on a golden throne.

"Ah, now she will be happy," he thought, but he was wrong.

By the afternoon, she was again grumbling. "Now I want to be the Empress of all the world," she said.

Pedro had to return yet once more and tell the magic silver fish of his wife's desire to be Empress of the world.

"Very well," said the fish. "Your wife's wish will be granted. Go back and see."

Now, Pedro saw an ever larger palace, built of precious marble, with a whole roof of solid gold. Going into the beautiful rooms, the humble fisherman found his wife sitting

on a huge golden throne, six feet high. She was wearing a dress covered with diamonds and pearls. She was talking and laughing with a crowd of gay princes and dukes.

The new Empress of all the world was happy, until the following morning, when she looked out of the window.

"What a horrid day," she grumbled. "See how ugly and cloudy the sky is. It makes me feel miserable. Go to the fish at once and say that I want to be the most important person in Heaven, so that I can make the sun shine whenever I wish."

As she spoke, a frightening storm arose. Rain, sleet and snow came slashing down from the black sky. Trees bent to the ground under the force of a howling wind and even the

rocks trembled in the crashing rough seas.

Amidst thunder and lightning, Pedro made his way to the seashore. He found the fish and shouted to it, explaining his wife's wish.

"Go home and you will find that she has been given a true reward," the magic silver fish replied. With a sudden quick twist, it turned and disappeared into the black and stormy sea.

The fisherman returned. The splendid palace had disappeared. Pedro's wife, dressed in tattered clothes, was sitting on a stool in front of their old wooden hut.

Because of her greed, she was back where she started, but at least the magic silver fish had done Pedro a good turn, for his wife never grumbled again.



THE SOLDIER AND THE HUNDRED HARES



Once upon a time, there lived a king whose name was Coimbra. King Coimbra had only one daughter, a very beautiful princess.

"When the princess marries, her husband will succeed me as king, for I have no son to follow me," said the king to himself. "Therefore I must be very careful who I choose for my son-in-law." He announced that he would marry his daughter to the man who succeeded in answering three riddles.

Princes, dukes, knights, earls and barons all came to the palace to try their luck at answering the king's three riddles. Each one failed and each one

was sent away in disgrace. Soon, there were very few princes or dukes or knights left and it looked as if the princess might never get married at all. King Coimbra was not altogether sorry. "For," he thought, "it shows that there is no one worthy to succeed me. I must be a very superior king indeed."

Then a soldier arrived at the palace. To the king's great annoyance the soldier, whose name was Sigmund, succeeded in answering all three riddles quite easily. King Coimbra did not want an ordinary soldier for a son-in-law and he was furious. He decided to get rid of Sigmund.

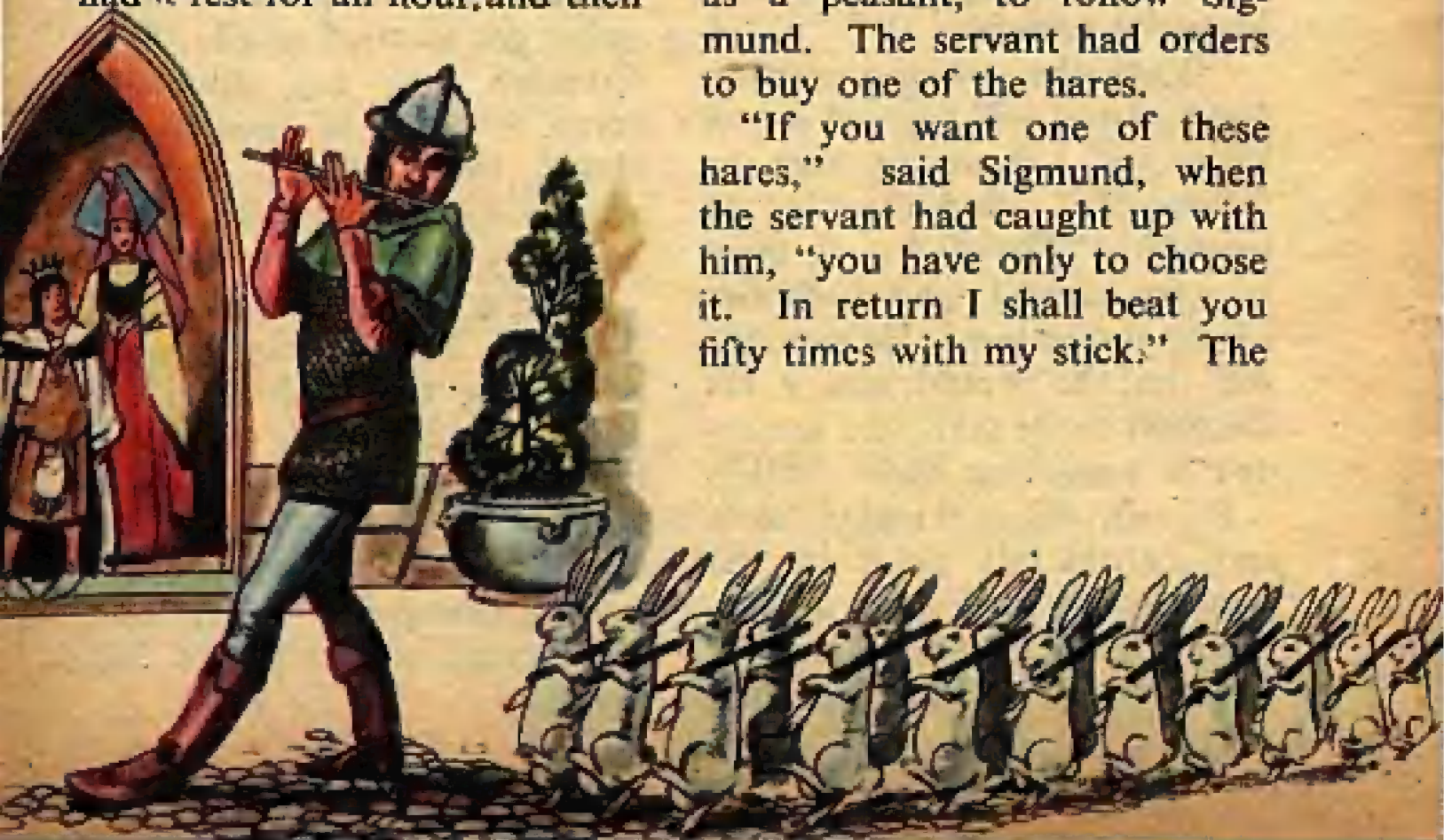
"It will take several days to prepare the great wedding feast required by such an important person as my daughter," said the king. "In the meantime, I shall put you in charge of my hundred hares. You will take them out to graze in the morning and bring them back again at night. If you lose one, I will cut off your head."

Sigmund agreed and next morning he left the palace with the hundred hares. As soon as they reached the meadow, the hares rushed off, leaping and running in all directions. "That's all right, you can go," said Sigmund, laughing. "I know how to bring you back easily enough." He sat down and had a rest for an hour, and then

he pulled a pipe out of his pocket. It was a magic pipe and when he blew on it, all the hares came back and crowded around him. He gave each one a hazel-nut twig and then he lined them up and taught them military exercises. That night, when he returned to the palace, King Coimbra was waiting for him. He was amazed to see Sigmund, marching like a general, with all the hares following behind him. When they drew level with the king, they stopped and saluted. The king counted and recounted the hares, but in vain. Not one was missing.

Next day Sigmund set out again with the hares. The king sent a servant, disguised as a peasant, to follow Sigmund. The servant had orders to buy one of the hares.

"If you want one of these hares," said Sigmund, when the servant had caught up with him, "you have only to choose it. In return I shall beat you fifty times with my stick." The



servant allowed Sigmund to beat him and hurried off happily with his hare. When he was about half a mile away, Sigmund blew on his magic pipe. The hare leaped out of the astonished servant's arms and ran back to join the others.

Next day, the king sent one of his ministers to follow Sigmund and take a hare. The minister disguised himself as a woodcutter.

"You can choose the biggest and fattest hare you can see," said Sigmund, when the disguised minister asked for one. "But in return I shall beat you a hundred times with my stick." The minister submitted to the beating and carried his hare away. Before he had gone far, Sigmund blew on the magic pipe. The hare kicked itself free at once and ran back to join the others.

The king was annoyed. Three days had passed and each night, when Sigmund came back, he still had one hundred hares. On the fourth day, the king himself followed Sigmund, dressed as a shepherd. He also offered to buy one of the hares.

"Take one," said Sigmund. "But in return you must let me give you one hundred kicks."



The king received the kicks in silence. Then he tucked the hare inside his jacket and started back, but as soon as the hare heard the magic pipe, he tore the lining of the king's coat and ran back to join the others.

Next morning, the king sent for Sigmund. "Dear Sigmund, he said. "You have guessed my riddles cleverly and guarded my hares carefully. Now I want you to be just as clever at filling this sack with truth. If you do not, I shall have your head cut off."

"Certainly, Your Majesty,"

replied Sigmund. Now the young man knew very well who his three visitors had been and he started to tell the story of a peasant who wanted to buy a hare and in return received fifty strokes of the stick. At that moment, the servant who had dressed up as the peasant was passing by. Sigmund blew softly on his pipe and the servant was forced to jump into the sack, crying, "It's true! It's true!"

Then Sigmund told the story of the woodcutter who wanted to buy a hare and received a hundred blows with the stick and as he blew on his pipe, the minister appeared and was forced to jump into the sack, crying, "It's true!"

Then Sigmund began to tell the story of the shepherd who asked to buy a hare, but before

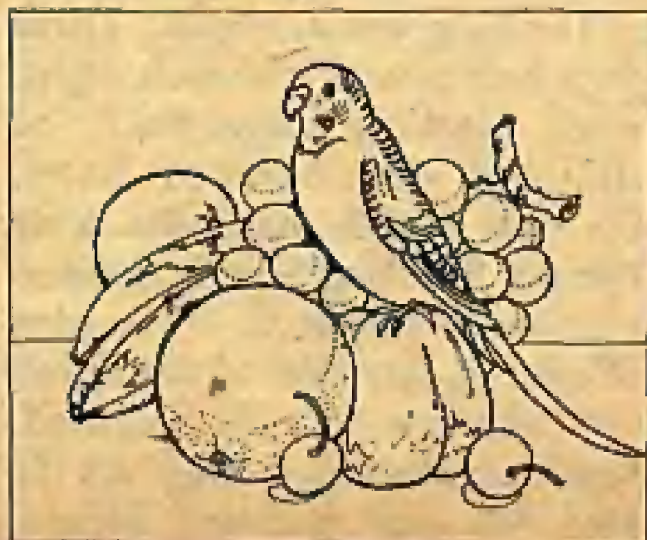
he could mention the hundred kicks, the king hurriedly stopped him. He had been the shepherd and he did not want to have to jump into the sack, crying, "It's true," as the others had done. The king now saw that he was defeated.

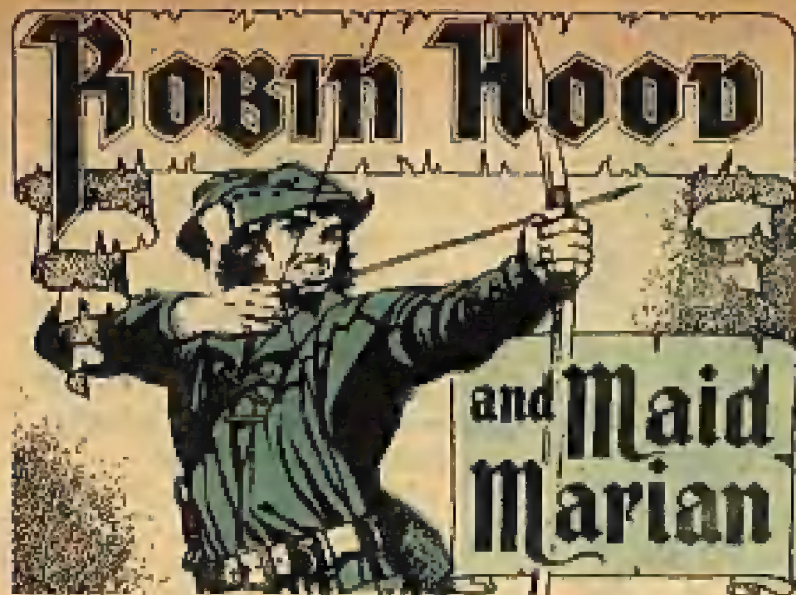
"Dear Sigmund," he said, "you are really a very clever young man and I am very pleased that you will marry my daughter and become the next king."

The nice thing was, that the king really meant it. "He must really be a very clever young man, for he has outwitted me every time," he thought. "And I am such a superior king that it is very hard to outwit me. He will make me a worthy successor and my daughter a fine husband."

WONDERS WITH COLOURS

Follow the left and colour the right.





Maid Marian was very ill. After many exciting adventures Robin Hood and Little John managed to bring a doctor all the way from Nottingham to her in Sherwood Forest. They arrived only just in time.

The doctor spent the whole night attending to Marian and everybody feared the worst. The outlaws were anxious and Robin got no sleep at all. But next morning Much the Miller ran up to Robin. "The doctor wants you," he said.



Robin hastened to Marian's hut wondering what the doctor had to tell him; but it was good news! "She will recover now," said the doctor. "She just needs rest for several days. That is all." How glad Robin was to hear the news.



Soon, Marian was able to sit outside her hut in the warm sunshine. "Thank you, Robin, for bringing the doctor to see me," she said. "You must promise to see him safely back to Nottingham." "I promise gladly," replied Robin Hood.

When Marian was quite well again the doctor said good-bye to her. He went off with Robin who took him through the forest, by many secret paths, towards Nottingham. "We will never forget all you have done," said Robin.



They parted on the outskirts of Nottingham, where Robin gave the doctor a bag of money in payment for his skill and services. "You will soon be home," said Robin. "Your way is down that path. Thank you once again, doctor."

Robin turned and walked back through the forest towards his camp. He was not alone, as he thought, for his most bitter enemy, Guy of Gisborne, was hiding in a tree, waiting to catch him. He thought this was his lucky day!



As Robin was quietly walking through the forest, Guy of Gisborne suddenly dropped down from a tree and stood in front of him, barring his way. "Now I've got you, Robin Hood!" he exclaimed. "Not yet!" retorted Robin, boldly.

Guy of Gisborne was armed with a stout cudgel and a big knife. Robin had only his staff. They circled each other warily then sprang to the attack. With one swift stroke of his staff, Robin knocked the knife out of Guy's hand.





That made them more equal, and they fought there in that glade, with no one to see what happened. They were both strong and clever. Maybe Guy of Gisborne was the heavier man but Robin gave as good as he got. Robin darted this way and that, and Guy of Gisborne could not hit him nor tell how and when Robin would strike him. Robin beat him down and struck the cudgel from Guy's grasp with one clever blow.



Robin's staff struck Guy of Gisborne on the head and the man sank down on the ground with no more fight left in him. "You have beaten me, Robin Hood," he muttered, in a hoarse voice. Robin had to fight a terrific battle against his bitter foe, but he won in the end. Guy of Gisborne was helpless so Robin propped him up against a tree. "Your friends," he said, "will be seeking you. They will soon find you."

Robin felt sore and weary, himself. He needed to rest for a while so he set out at once for his secret camp, deep in the heart of Sherwood Forest. "We'll meet again, Robin Hood," growled Guy of Gisborne, as Robin left.



Meanwhile, the Sheriff of Nottingham was sitting in his castle, wondering how he could catch Robin Hood, when a servant came with the news that the outlaws had sent the doctor home. "Bring him here!" ordered the Sheriff.

The doctor was brought before the Sheriff. "Robin Hood guided me home," he explained. "He left me just outside the city." The Sheriff started from his chair. "Then we can catch him," he exclaimed, "if we go after him, now!"





The Sheriff thought that this was a chance in a million. He called for his knights, and mounted on their willing horses they thundered out of the City of Nottingham in a cloud of dust, and rode rapidly towards Sherwood Forest.

Faster and faster rode the Sheriff and his soldiers into Sherwood Forest. It was not long before they came across Guy of Gisborne propped against a tree. "That's the way he went!" shouted Guy. "He hasn't been gone very long."



It was true enough. Robin was staggering along a forest path, weak and aching after his fight with his bitterest enemy. "I only hope I can keep going until I get to the camp," he thought. Then he heard the thunder of horses.

He listened for a moment, until he felt sure that he was being pursued. Wearily and painfully, he clambered up into the boughs of a big oak. He stretched himself out on a stout bough that overhung the path and lay very still. The next moment the Sheriff and his men came galloping along the winding path beneath him.



No one saw Robin hiding up in the big tree. He lay so still that he seemed to be a part of the tree, and the Sheriff's men passed by unaware that the man they were seeking was so near to them. They searched everywhere.

There were two other men in the forest, also looking for Robin. They were Friar Tuck and Little John. "He should be home by now," said the Friar. "He must be in danger." But they were in danger, too, for the Normans were near!



ANOTHER EXCITING EPISODE IN NEXT ISSUE

PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



ANANT DESAI



ANANT DESAI

- These two photographs are somewhat related. Can you think of suitable captions? Could be single words, or several words, but the two captions must be related to each other.
- Rs. 20 will be awarded as prize for the best caption. Remember, your entry must reach us, by 30th June.
- Winning captions will be announced in AUGUST issue
- Write your entry on a POST CARD, specify the month, give your full name, address, age and post to:

PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST
CHANDAMAMA MAGAZINE
MADRAS-600 026

Result of Photo Caption Contest held in April Issue

The prize is awarded to
Miss Prema Narayanaswamy
2 Edward Road
Bangalore 560 052.

Winning Entry—'Blooming Pride'—'Playful Bride'



REWARD FOR BRAVERY

Anangapal, the Prince of Assam, was a renowned warrior. He and his elite guards always travelled in a body. Every day they held competitions to test one another's skill with various kinds of weaponry. Sometimes the tournaments were followed by bouts of feasting.

One night Anangapal resting on his forearm looked around at the company and asked, "Tell me, is there a princess worthy of becoming my bride? She must be beautiful with qualities of heart and mind. Does anyone know of such a maiden?"

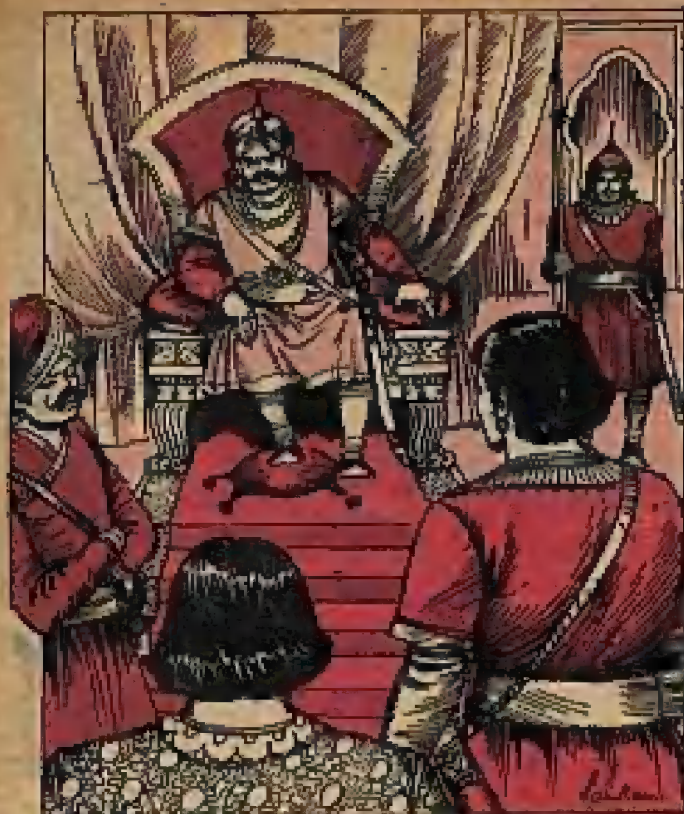
The courtiers looked at one another and scratched their heads not knowing what to reply. At last, Parakrama, a young man, spoke up. "Sir, the King of Manipur has two

daughters. The elder girl whose name is Lilavathi, is also well versed in the martial arts. She rides, shoots, and hunts extremely well. The younger daughter is named Mohana. She is a comely girl who excels in such arts as dance and song. I believe she is worthy of becoming your bride."

Anangapal clapped his hand in joy and said, "Good, let us invade Manipur and bring away the Princess Mohana."

Parakrama said, "Sire, for this little task you don't need an army. Let me go with one other warrior and I'll accomplish this task very easily. I was a courtier there once!"

As Parakrama was also a very doughty fighter, Anangapal did not doubt that he would carry out the task entrusted to him. So he permitted Parak-



rama to go to Manipur and sent one of his bodyguards with him.

Parakrama went straight to the king's court and boldly said to the king, "Sire, I have come on behalf of my sovereign Lord, Anangapal. He wishes to marry your daughter, Mohana."

At these words the king of Manipur bounded from his throne and shouted, "What crazy talk is this? How dare you ask for the hand of the younger daughter while Lilavathi remains as yet unwed? Guards, arrest this impudent fellow."

At once Parakrama leaped on the throne and holding the

king by the throat drew his sharp poniard from his waist and made a motion as if to sever his jugular veins. Then he said between his teeth, "Call your guards off or you die."

The king who was in truth a coward cowered before Parakrama and pleaded for his life. Then after obtaining an assurance that Mohana would be married to Anangapal, Parakrama released him. Later the king saw his daughter off with Parakrama's retinue and heaved a sigh of relief.

Parakrama travelling swiftly reached the outskirts of Manipur and decided to rest in an inn on the roadside. Just then he heard the sound of fast galloping horses and detecting some danger in that, drew his sword and held it ready in his hand.

A horseman galloped out of the dusk and drew rein in front of Parakrama. Then leaping down from the horse rushed at the latter with flashing sword. But Parakrama leaped aside nimbly, and as the other stumbled past swung his sword in an arc and slashed at the head of the attacker. He only succeeded in knocking off the enemy's headgear which dis-

closed long tresses bound up loosely. The attacker was a maiden. Parakrama stood astonished and the maiden said, "Parakrama, will you war against women?"

Parakrama asked, "And why has the Princess Lilavathi come in pursuit of us?"

The Princess replied, "How can my sister marry when I am not married? Therefore you must marry me."

Now Parakrama had not expected this, so he said humbly, "Am I that fortunate?"

When the Princess gladly agreed to marry him, his joy knew no bounds. They proposed to marry after reaching Assam.

But Anangapal did not approve of the match between Lilavathi and one of his guards. He felt it was beneath his dignity to acknowledge Parakrama as his relative. When he ex-

pressed his disapproval, Parakrama said, "I did nothing. She offered to marry me."

Lilavathi vexed at this said, "Very well. I'll marry the one who is a better warrior than Parakrama. Let us hold a tournament."

So a test was arranged. In the courtyard of the royal palace, a sword was stuck in the ground with its tip pointing upwards. Then Parakrama took his bow and with a well flighted shaft cleft the sword in two equal parts. Lilavathi holding up the pieces asked whether anyone could do better. All the warriors tried and failed. So finally, Anangapal had to agree willy-nilly to the marriage of Lilavathi with Parakrama. But sensing Anangapal's resentment towards him, Parakrama left for Manipur, where in course of time, he was crowned king.



THE FOUR HAPPY FRIENDS

Once there was a miller, who owned a donkey. For many years the donkey had worked hard, carrying sacks of flour to the mill and pulling a large wheel round and round, which turned the machinery to grind the corn.

The donkey was getting old and was no longer able to work so hard. "This donkey is useless to me," said the miller to himself one day. "He is getting slower and slower as he gets older. He is not worth the food he eats and, goodness knows, it costs me enough to buy food for him. I will kill him tomorrow."

The donkey overheard his master's words and that night, when all was dark and quiet, he escaped and made off down the road. He decided to spend the rest of his life wandering around the country as a strolling musician. "I have a fine voice, even though I am getting old," said the donkey to himself. "I am sure I shall be a great success," and to prove it he said, "Ee-aw, Ee-aw," to himself, several times.

The noise attracted the attention of a dog, who was sitting at the side of the road. "What have you got to be so happy about, donkey?" asked the dog.

"I am going to the big city, to earn my living as a strolling musician, so I am just doing a bit of practising," replied the donkey. "What are you doing, friend dog, lying there in the road, with your tongue hanging out?"

"Ah," said the dog, "my story is a sad one. I have served my master faithfully for many years and today I overheard him saying that he was going to kill me because I am getting old and can no longer go hunting like I used to, so I ran away and now I have nowhere to go."

"Come along with me," said the donkey. "We can travel together and keep each other company."

The dog went with the donkey and farther down the road they came across a cat. The cat looked thin and miserable. "Good day to you, cat," called the donkey. "May I ask why

you look so unhappy?"

"My master wants to get rid of me," replied the cat. "I am getting old and I am no longer as good at catching mice as I used to be. In my youth, I was a champion mouser, but I am not so quick as I once was."

"Come with us," said the donkey. "We are going to the big city to make our fortune as wandering minstrels." The cat joined them and they went on down the road together.

Soon the three animals came to a farm. There, on the fence, sat a cockerel, crowing at the top of his voice. "You are piercing our eardrums with your crowing," called the donkey. "Tell us, what is the matter?"

"Oh," cried the cock, "I am making as much noise as I can while I am still alive. Tomorrow I shall be dead, for I have heard my mistress say that she has guests coming tomorrow and she told the cook to kill me and put me in a saucepan."

"Why not come with us?" said the donkey. "We are going to the big city to make our fortune as wandering minstrels. I am sure your powerful voice would be a help."



"Yes, yes," crowed the cock, very delighted. The four friends went down the road together. The big city was a long way off and they decided to spend the night in a wood. The dog, the cat and the donkey all curled up at the foot of a tree, but the cock, as was his habit, flew up and perched on a branch. In the distance, he saw a light and he called down to his friends, "I am sure I can see a house where we could spend the night more comfortably."

The animals went to look for it and led by the cock, who could see the light, they soon found it. The donkey, who was the tallest, looked in through the window. "What can you see?" the others asked.

"I can see a table piled high with food and some robbers sitting around it," replied the donkey. "What can we do to get rid of those rascals?"

"Perhaps we could make a loud noise and scare them

away," said the cat, so they made a plan. The dog jumped on the donkey's back, the cat jumped on the dog's back, the cock perched on the cat's head and they all made the loudest noises they could. The donkey banged on the door with his hooves and brayed. The dog barked, the cat howled and the cock crowed. Then they all jumped through the door, into the room. The robbers were so frightened by the noise and the unexpected attack, that they fled in great haste.

The four friends sat down at the table and ate what they wanted. Then they turned out the light and lay down to sleep in front of the fire.

When the robbers reached the safety of the trees, they began to recover from their fright. "What fools we were to run away like that," said the robber chief and he sent one of his men back to have a look round. The robber tiptoed up to the house, which was in darkness and crept into the room. He saw the cat's eyes gleaming in the dark and thought they were pieces of glowing coal from the fire. He picked up a stick, intending to light it from the fire and make a flaming torch





of it, but as he did so, the cat sprang at him, scratching his face. The robber turned to flee, but the dog bit his leg, the donkey gave him a hearty kick as he passed and the cock pecked him.

The robber rushed, trembling and out of breath, through the wood, until he reached the robber band. "There are witches and demons in the

house," he panted. "They attacked me and I only just managed to escape."

From that evening, the robbers did not have the courage to return to their old house and the four friends, who liked the house very much, decided not to become strolling minstrels after all, but to stay there peacefully for the rest of their lives.



ABUNU THE WISE

Long, long ago, when many of the Arab people lived in tents, as some of them still do, there lived a king whose name was Ahmed. King Ahmed had a wonderful palace built of gold and marble. It stood on the edge of a lake, or oasis, that was called Hamman. In the village near the palace, where the king's servants lived, there was a wise and clever young man whose name was Abunu. Abunu was a kind man and he liked to help people whenever he could. In fact, there was a saying in the village, which went something like this, "If you do not know what to do, go and ask young Abunu."

Once a week, on every Wednesday, when the market-

place was closed and all the people had stopped working, King Ahmed sat on his throne in the courtyard of the palace. On that day, all the people who had complaints or thought they had been badly treated in the market, would come to the king and tell him their troubles. Then the king would decide how best that problem could be settled. Sometimes, even the king was not sure what he should do and that was when he called for Abunu the Wise to advise him.

One Wednesday, when the king was sitting on his throne and Abunu the Wise was sitting next to the Prime Minister, listening to the complaints, a greedy merchant appeared and

pushed his way to the front of the queue, dragging a poor man behind him. The merchant bowed very low to the king and said, "Your most Imperial Majesty, your Right Royal Sire, this little man has stolen something from me. He has taken away one of the most treasured things in my life."

"What did he steal?" asked the king, expecting to hear that all the man's gold and riches had disappeared.

"This man has stolen the smell of my dinner," replied the merchant.

"The smell of your dinner!" exclaimed the king. "By the great desert sands, how did he manage to do that?" The king turned to the beggar and asked, "Is this true? Did you really steal the smell of this merchant's dinner and if so how did you do it?"

The beggar bowed low to the ground and started to tell his sad story to the king.

"Your Highness, I was wandering through the desert on my way to the oasis of Hamman, when I happened to see this merchant's tent. The merchant was waiting for his evening meal to be served and as I sniffed the night air a wonderful

smell of roast beef and rich gravy came to me. I stood near the tent and stayed there thinking of all that lovely food. For you see, your Majesty, it is not often that I get the chance to smell such a beautiful dinner like that, let alone eat one and the smell was better than nothing at all. However, when the rich merchant had finished his dinner he came out of the tent and stood in front of its doorway, so I called out to him, 'Thank you, great merchant, thank you very much for letting me share the smell of your dinner.' But the merchant was not very pleased and he ordered his servants to seize me and tie me to the nearest camel. Then he dragged me all the





way here. So you see, your Majesty, here I am."

The beggar stepped back and the king turned to the merchant and said, "Now let me hear your side of the story."

"Your Highness," said the merchant bowing low to the

ground as the beggar had done, "my cook had prepared a lovely piece of beef for me and roasted it in just the way that I like it done. I was looking forward to this delicious dinner, but alas, when I came to eat I could taste the food, but the smell of it had completely disappeared. I was very angry, because I am very fond of the smell of roast beef and rich gravy. 'What has happened to the smell of my roast beef?' I asked my cook,

but he could not tell me, so I stood outside the doorway of my tent, trying to think of the ways in which the smell could have disappeared. It was then, your Highness, that this beggar man spoke to me and so I knew that it was he who had stolen it."

The king thought about this difficult problem for quite a few minutes before he answered. "I realise," he said, "that the beggar man did smell the roast beef and the beggar himself admits it, but the dinner belonged to the merchant and therefore the smell did also. I decide that the beggar is guilty of this crime and as a punishment he must pay the merchant the sum of twelve silver pennies."

The greedy merchant was delighted and he could not wait to get his hands on the money, but the poor beggar felt very sad. He stepped forward and said, "Your Highness, I cannot possibly pay the fine because I have not got twelve silver pennies to give to this merchant."

While everybody was trying to solve this problem, Abunu the Wise, who had been listening closely to all that had been said, stepped forward and addressed the king. "Your Majesty, I have a suggestion to make,"

he said. "May I pay the twelve silver pennies to the merchant? It is plain that this poor beggar has not got the money."

"Very well," said the king, who was eager to get the case over. Turning to the merchant, he asked him, "Are you ready to receive the money?"

"Yes," replied the merchant, greedily rubbing his hands together. Abunu smiled wisely, took twelve pennies from his purse and gave them to the beggar. He ordered the beggar to throw the money to the ground penny by penny. The poor beggar was amazed and could not understand why he had been told to do this, but he knew that Abunu was a wise man, so he obeyed him.

The beggar took the money and threw it down on the stone floor of the courtyard. As each silver penny struck the stone and rolled away, it tinkled. When the last coin had fallen, Abunu turned to the merchant and said, "Did you hear the tinkle of those coins?"

"Yes," said the man, who was a little puzzled. "I heard them."

"Well," said Abunu, "the tinkle of the coins is yours, for that is the part of the money

which rightly belongs to you. This beggar had a smell of your roast beef, but did not have any of the dinner, therefore you will get only the tinkle of the pennies and none of the money."

"That is fair," agreed the king. "You are quite right, Abunu the Wise. Let that be the judgement in this case."

On hearing this, the poor beggar went away happy and pleased at not being fined, while the greedy merchant went away very angry, because he had not been able to increase his riches.

Abunu the Wise just bowed to the king and went home, satisfied that justice had been done.





WHOSE MONEY BAG?

The city of Kancheepuram was well known for its prosperity. As a trading centre it attracted merchants from all over the world.

Once, a foreign trader visited that city and brought with him five hundred gold pieces with which he intended to trade. He was a little careless with his money and soon everyone came to know that he had a lot of gold on him.

One day as he was walking down the street, a strange woman sprang up and clutching him by the hand exclaimed, "Aha, you are the one who stole my money. Come on, out with it. Give me back my five hundred gold pieces."

The startled trader gasped and said, "What do you mean,

your money? I don't understand."

But the woman insisted that the money was hers. Soon a big crowd gathered, and the confusion was great. One man in the crowd exclaimed, "Why do you quarrel so? Go to the Judge and he will settle the dispute."

The case went to the Judge. The woman insisted vehemently that the trader had indeed robbed her of that much money.

The Judge was perplexed in the extreme. He could not bring himself to disbelieve the woman though the pathetic stance of the trader attracted his attention.

So he said to the merchant, "Give that money to the woman."



The trader was taken aback by this, but as he had no other alternative, he gave her the bag containing the money.

As the woman left the Court, the Judge whispered to the trader, "Run after that woman and try to snatch her bag."

The trader ran after her and tried to snatch the bag from her hand. But she held on and dragged the trader back to the Court. She exclaimed to the Judge, "Sir, you ordered me to take the bag from him, and now he tries to take it away from me by force. I have caught him red-handed in the act."

As soon as the Judge heard this, he ordered his men to take the bag from her and give it to the trader. Then he said, "This bag rightfully belongs to the trader. The woman brought him to the Court as soon as he tried to snatch the bag. If he had indeed stolen it from her, she would have lodged a complaint with the Court before. As she did not do it, I declare that she is a cheat who is trying to relieve honest people of their money."

The woman could not deny the charges against her and so admitted her guilt.



"Can't you read?!!"



THE DIVINE POOL

The kingdom of Dharanipur was ruled by King Karunisa. Once he defeated an enemy king in battle and was returning to his kingdom. On the way, as the army was crossing a patch of desert, the king felt thirsty. So his soldiers fanned out in all directions to search for water.

Soon in their search, they came across a valley in which they saw a rocky well brimming with clear water. When they drank the water, it tasted sweet and fine. So the king quenched his thirst and the army prepared to move out. But a hermit came to the spring, and said to the king, "Oh King! This water is divine. Once for miles around everything was

arid. Then it rained. A sparrow that flew overhead unable to bear the heat of the sun came down and pierced the earth with its beak. Then an eagle scooped up the earth. At once this spring came up. Then all the animals of the desert and the nearby forest came here to drink water. This spring is the life line for all God's creatures here."

Having said this, the hermit went his way.

The king thought there must be a perennial spring underground. He determined to build a tank there and earn fame for himself.

So work began and after some months a lovely tank was

built. Closeby he built a choultry for tired travellers. On an auspicious day the tank was named Dharaniswar tank.

But when people came to draw water, they found that the water tasted sour and brackish. Soon it became unfit for human consumption and people used it only to wash themselves. Even the hermit who had used it formerly now ceased to come there. The king became unhappy when he heard this and ordered his soldiers to find the hermit and bring him to the palace.

After a long search the hermit was found and escorted to the king's presence.

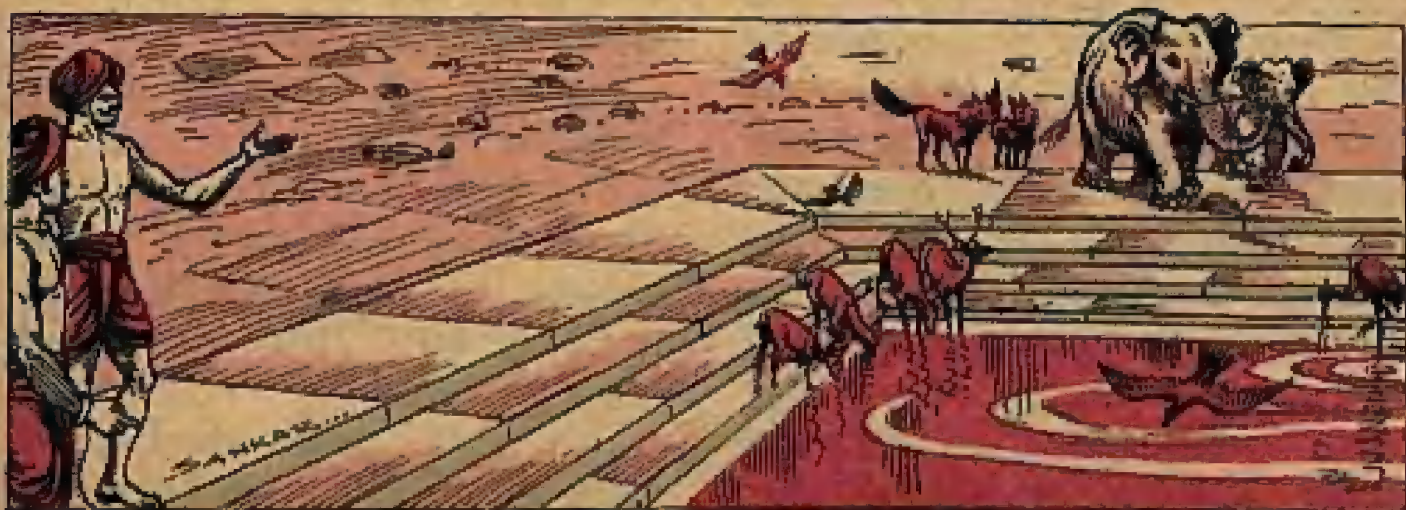
The hermit asked, "Oh! King! Why have you brought me here?"

The king said, "Holy sir, I understand that you no longer

use the pool I have built. You no longer drink water from there. What can be the reason?"

The hermit replied, "Oh King! Let me tell you then. The waters of the pool are no longer divine. The dumb creatures of God made that pool with their own efforts. They did not expect any reward for their work. But you built a wall round the pool and wanted to add to your fame. The animals in the forest could no longer quench their thirst. Hence the pool lost its sanctity. Its waters turned sour at your selfishness."

The king felt ashamed to hear his guilt pointed out to him in this fashion. So he demolished the wall, and the pool became once more, a natural spring fit for God's creatures.





HAKIM AND THE PHANTOMS

In a certain village stood an old inn which had long since been abandoned. Now it was in ruins and no one ever went near it for rumours said it was haunted.

Hakim who lived in that village was an opium addict. His greatest pleasure lay in smoking his opium pipe. Once he had smoked his pipe he would lie for hours together as dead as a log. Whatever he earned he spent on his pipe.

One day he found himself a pauper. All his money was gone. Even his stock of opium was all gone. He went round the village begging for money but no one was prepared to lend him any for they full well knew what he would do once he got hold of some money.

Now, a few mischievous lads of the village decided to play a joke on the now desperate Hakim. They went to him and said, "Brother, we'll give you some opium and some food. But you must spend a night in the haunted inn. Do you agree?"

Hakim nodded his head eagerly and said, "Brothers, give me but a few ounces of opium, and I'll even visit the hell to please you."

The lads gave him a food packet and some opium. At night they took him to the deserted inn and left him in the silent hall.

Hakim smoked his pipe and gradually found himself drifting away from the external world. In that state it was doubtful

whether he'd notice anything at all, much less a few ghosts!

Now in that house lived a host of phantoms who were surprised and then angry that their peace had been disturbed. They came flitting across the hall silently to look into the matter and saw Hakim resting against a pillar. They moved round him, and jostled each other in order to get a close look. They rubbed their icy fingers on his face, but he made no movement.

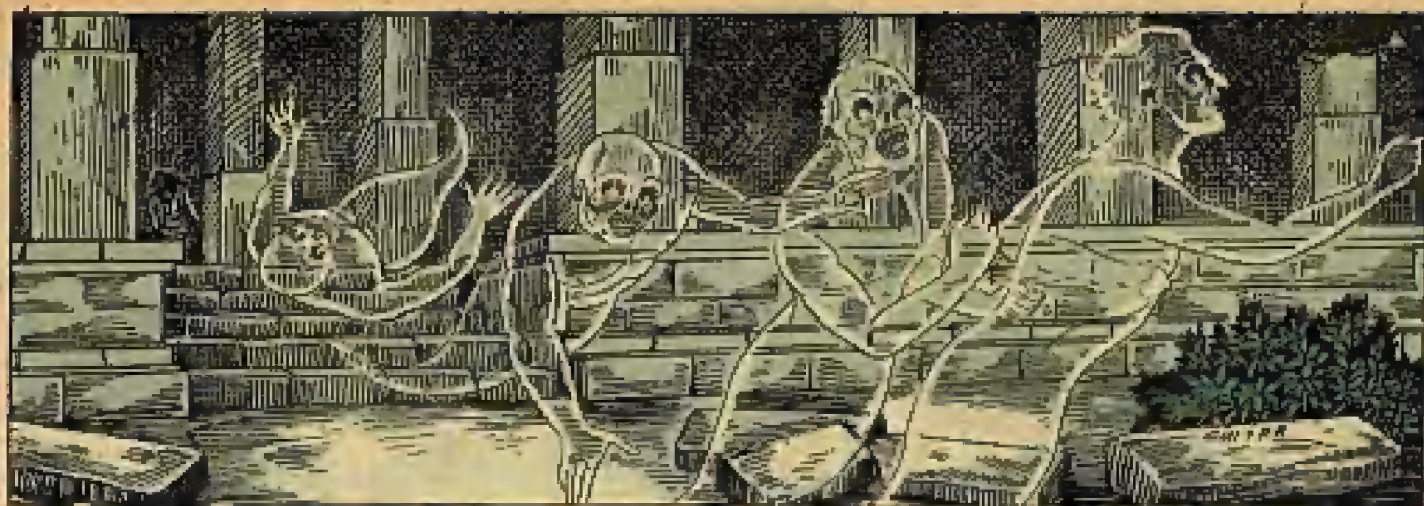
One ghost went near his face and suddenly screamed in fright. Hakim's eyes were wide open, and they seemed like two pin-points of bright flame, red and

bloodshot. The ghosts thought that his eyes were spitting fire! Actually he was under the effect of opium.

At about this time Hakim moved, then sat up straight. He was very much hungry. In that darkness he did not know where the village lads had kept the food packet. At last his outstretched fingers touched the knot of the cloth bundle containing the food. "Ha, top knot, I'll eat you first," exclaimed Hakim. Then he opened the bundle and took out a rice cake. "I'll swallow you whole, fatty," chuckled Hakim. A little later his probing fingers found an egg. He caressed it with his hand and said, "Bald Head, you're next." Finally he took out a piece of coarse bread, and exclaimed, "So there you are furry fur, I am not going to leave you either."

Now all the phantom listeners shivered in great fright. The names of some of them were Top Knot, Fatty, Bald Head and Furry Fur. They thought Hakim meant to eat them all up. They said to one another, "This man is no ordinary mortal. He knows who we are. He says he'll gobble





us up. So let us appease him and then run away from here."

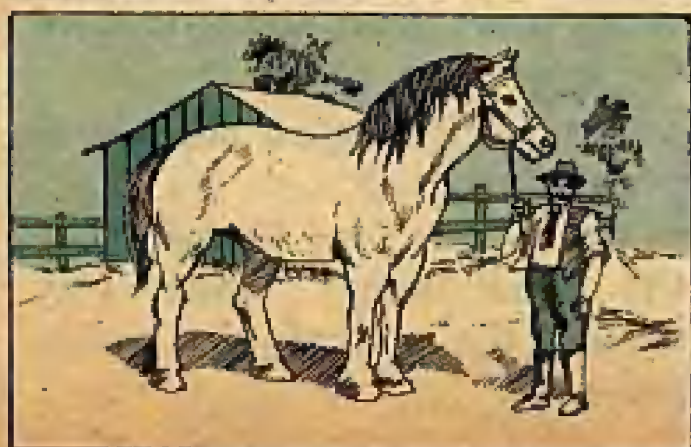
So they glided back into the desolate rooms and from nooks and corners brought out large hoards of gold and silver. These they kept near him. Then they told Hakim, "Sir, take these and spare our lives."

At this Hakim's bloodshot eyes opened wider and he mumbled incoherently. "No, that won't do. I am very hungry. I must gobble up everything at once."

At these words, the phantoms ran for dear life and did not

stop until they had crossed the borders into another land."

In the morning Hakim came to his senses and found himself lying in the midst of a veritable treasure trove. Naturally he took all of it home and lived a happy life. As for the village folks when they heard how he had braved the night and the ghosts at the haunted inn, well, they made him the next Mayor in which post he has continued ever since. You see, as the Mayor he did not have much to do and so could smoke his opium pipe all day long and lie in the greatest bliss possible.



WHICH WAS THE BIGGEST HORSE THAT EVER LIVED?

What was thought to have been the biggest was a Belgian stallion owned by a man in the American State of Iowa. In 1938 when the horse was nine years old, it weighed more than 1½ tons: its owner refused an offer of Rs. 32,000 for it. This fine stallion was still growing, but since 1938 nothing seems to have been heard of it.



Mare of Birbal

Once Akbar the Great said to Birbal, "Birbal, can you show me a faithful creature and a faithless one?"

Birbal thought for a minute and declared that he would produce both varieties in the court the next day.

Birbal had long wanted to ridicule his son-in-law who was a mean and selfish fellow. He thought the King's request gave him an excellent opportunity for this. So the next day he took his son-in-law as well as his dog to the court. He brought the dog forward and said, "Sire, here is the faithful creature I promised to show you. It eats what I give, and runs after me in gratitude."

Akbar asked, "But where is the faithless creature?"

Birbal pointed out to his son-in-law and said, "There he is. Faithless to the marrow. I give him whatever he asks, but he is always grumbling, and heaps insults on me."

At once Akbar said, "Then let my soldiers behead him. You will be well rid of a faithless creature."

Birbal answered swiftly, "Sire, you and I are both sons-in-law of some fathers-in-law. We too have taken everything from them and grumbled for more."

The King laughed heartily to hear this.

At another time Birbal asked the Great King, "Sire, why should the sun always set in the west?"

Akbar replied, "You should go and ask a fool to answer this question."

"That is why I am asking you, Sire," shot back Birbal.

The King far from being offended laughed at such a swift repartee.

Amongst the courtiers Abul Fazl was not very friendly with Birbal. One day he decided to belittle the court wit. So he said, "Birbal, the King is thinking about appointing you the controller of all the dogs in the land. What do you think?"

Birbal replied, "Good. Let him appoint me. At least I shall have the pleasure of controlling you first."

Akbar was highly amused to hear this. From that day on Abul Fazl never tried his sarcasm on Birbal.

Once a relative of Birbal fell foul of the Great King and was sentenced to death. The King went to the scaffold and saw Birbal standing there. Even before the latter could say anything, the King declared, "Birbal, I know what you are going to say. Whatever you say, I am going to do the opposite."

Birbal pretended to be surprised and said, "But Sire, I

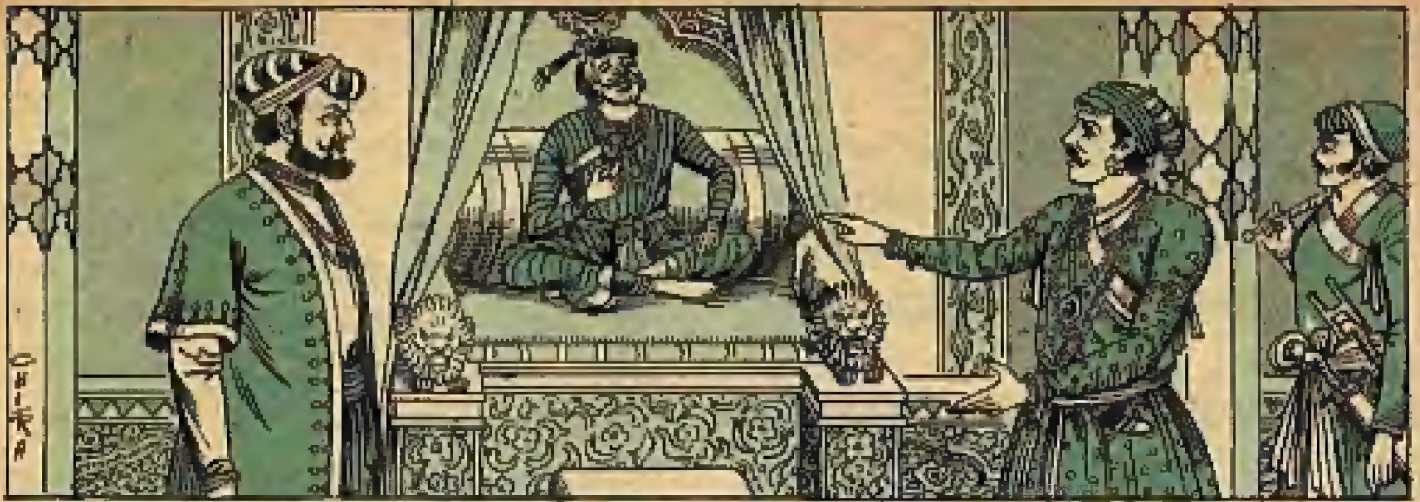
was only going to say that you must on no account free this relative of mine. Hang him well and perfectly."

The King was so much taken aback by Birbal's wit that he released the offender forthwith and rewarded Birbal for his presence of mind.

Once Akbar told Birbal that he would give him some land as a gift. But whenever the court wit reminded him about it, Akbar pretended to be surprised and raised and lowered his head like a camel.

One day Akbar was watching a parade of his best camels and after sometime turned to





Birbal and said, "Tell me, why is it that these camels raise and lower their heads so?"

Birbal replied innocently, "Well, Sire, they must have promised to gift some land to their dependants. Everytime

the latter ask for it, the camels shrug their shoulders to indicate their dismissal of the dependants' plea."

Akbar, without a word wrote out the deed for some land and gave it to Birbal.

MERMAID

It is an Imaginary female creature, having the head, torso and arms of a woman and the tail of a fish.

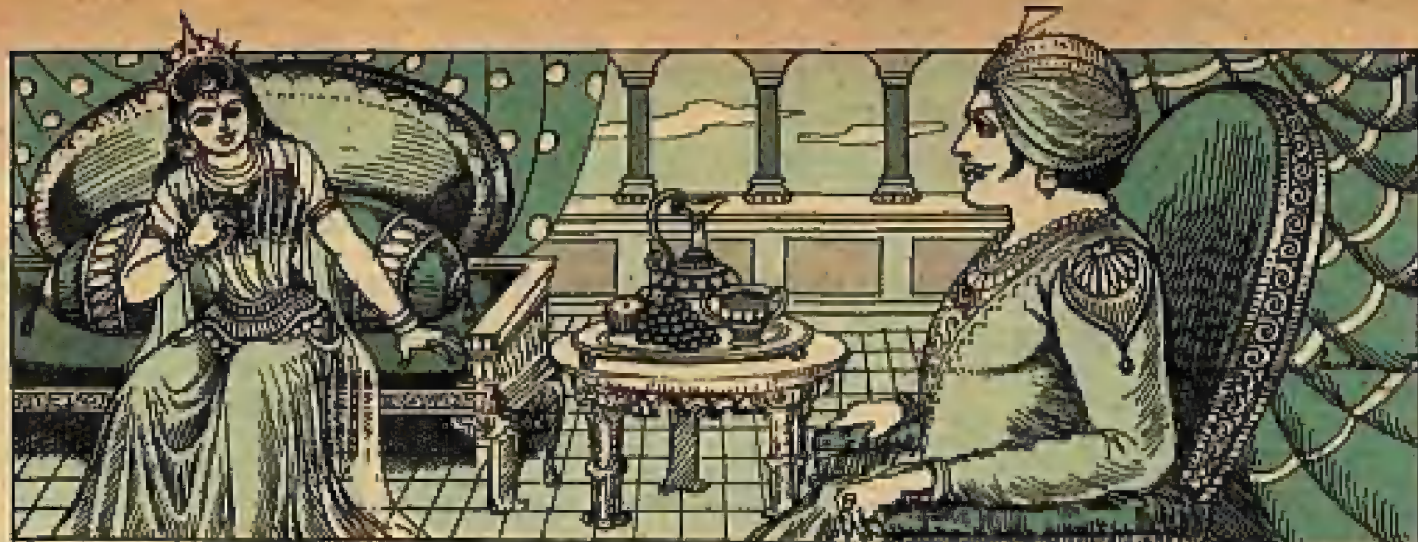
Seamen who travelled the world long, long ago always returned with such vivid tales of mermaids that many people believed in them. The truth is that mermaids never did exist; what is likely is that they owed their origin to a sea mammal called a dugong. This creature will often rest on a rock while cradling its young in its flippers; in his imagination the seaman pictured a human mother nursing her baby, so he invented his tales of mermaids.



SEA CREATURE THAT THROWS OUT INK



There is a sea creature called cuttlefish which throws out ink. It has two long and eight short tentacles, which it uses when catching its food — shrimps and prawns. When in danger from enemies, the cuttlefish throws out an inky-like fluid which forms a dense cloud, hiding the creature so that it can make its escape.



THE QUITE ANSWER

The prince of Sonapur, Swarnakumar, was young and handsome. Many princesses, naturally, were eager to marry him, although he would have none of them. Each day brought new proposals from kings of distant lands and the court officials found it difficult to cope with the flood of requests from fond fathers who wanted to marry off their daughters to the prince.

Harrassed by all this, the prince hit upon a novel idea to forestall the unwelcome attentions of the kings. He declared that any princess desiring to marry him must ask him three questions. If he failed to answer even one, he would admit defeat and marry that maiden. He announced that he would visit each city by turn and sent

his couriers ahead to announce his arrival.

In this manner, he went from kingdom to kingdom and dazzled the courts with his brilliant wit and wisdom. No problem was difficult for him and his answers were always right. Thus in all the lands no princess could defeat him with her questions and Swarnakumar continued to travel all over the world, still a bachelor.

At last he came to the city of Chandrapura and met the charming princess, Chandravathi. She was very beautiful and the prince fell in love with her. He thought he would like to marry her. But first he had to complete the test set forth by him.

Came the day, when from behind a soft silk curtain the princess shot her first question at Swarnakumar.

"How can man find three kinds of fulfilments in life and what are they?"

"Good education is the first fulfilment, marriage is the second and final fulfilment is to be found in death," answered the prince briefly.

Chandravathi asked next, "What can't be achieved by money or power?"

Swarnakumar replied, "There are many things which defy both money and power. For example, you cannot turn cooked rice into grains again nor can the cow's milk be milked back."

Chandravathi despairing of winning over the prince she

neard of and fallen in love, asked at last, "What must one do if a quarrel develops with a fool?"

At this Swarnakumar remained silent and conceded defeat.

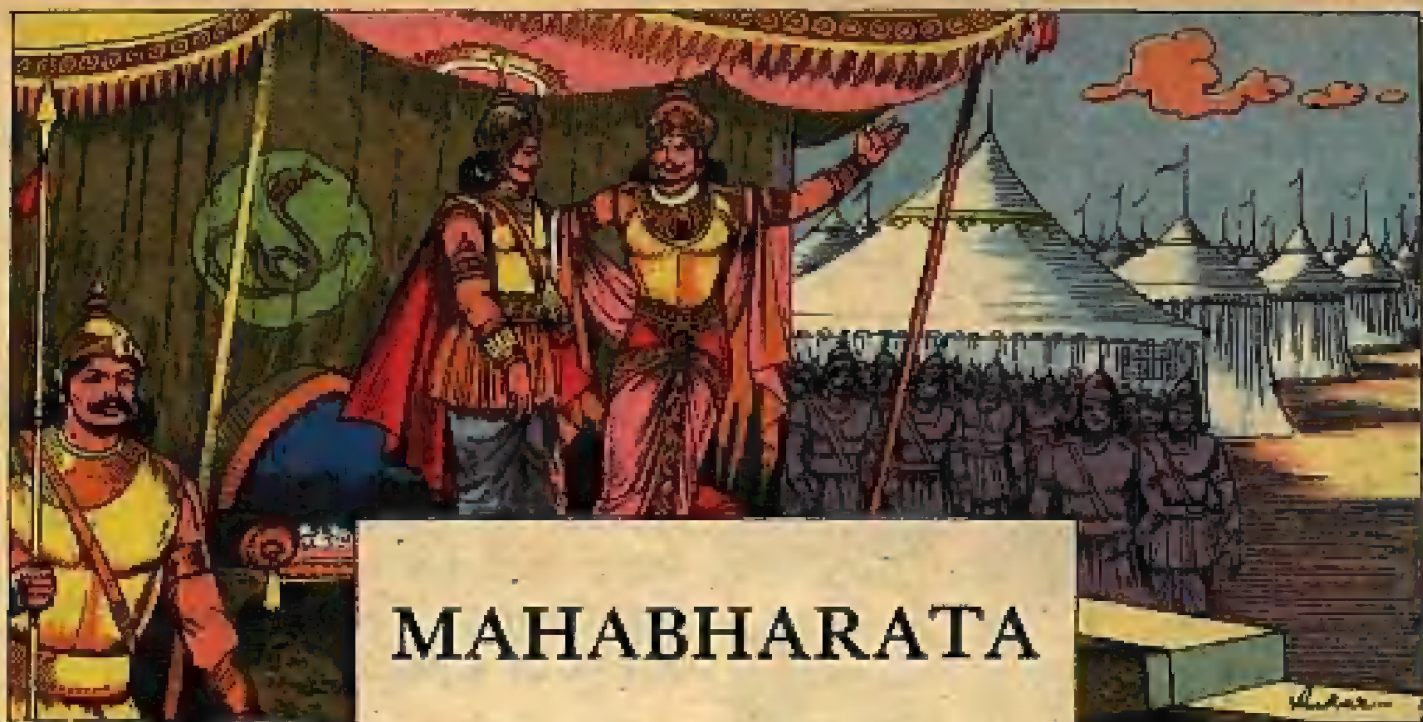
The King of Chandrapur declared that his daughter had won and requested the prince to marry her.

After they were married Chandravathi asked her husband in private.

"Of course a silly one." "Why didn't you answer my last question?"

Swarnakumar replied laughingly, "The answer to your last question is that in a quarrel with a fool one should remain silent. Had I answered, I could not have married you. As I very much wanted to marry you, I kept quiet."





MAHABHARATA

Finally, Lord Bhishma the Grand Patriarch and architect of Duryodhana's victories fell down mortally wounded. Arjuna had accomplished this mighty task by attacking the old warrior in the company of Sikhandi. On seeing the latter Bhishma dropped his bow, and at once Arjuna's barbs pierced his armour. But he did not die immediately. He lay on a cushion of arrows high above the ground. When he asked for water, Arjuna shot an arrow into the ground, and a cool spring jetted out to quench the dying warrior's thirst.

After the fall of Bhishma, Drona led the troops into battle. Abhimanyu, eager and rash advanced into a trap set for

him, and was killed instantly by the Kauravas. On hearing the sad news Arjuna swore a terrible vengeance on Saindhava who had prevented the Pandavas from coming to the aid of the young Pandava prince. Next day Saindhava fell to Arjuna's arrows.

When Drona heard from Yudhishtira that Aswathama, a mighty elephant was dead, mistakenly he thought it referred to his son, and stood on the battlefield totally unnerved and defenceless. Seizing this opportunity Dhrishtadyumna killed him.

At last Karna assumed command of the Kaurava forces. But though he displayed great valour and was true to his



boast, he could not win over Arjuna. When his chariot got bogged down in the mud, he jumped down to pull the wheels out. At the same time a well flighted arrow from Arjuna pierced his heart and he died.

Then Salliya led the Kaurava forces but he too fell, killed by Yudhishtira.

On the eighteenth day the Great War came to an end. Countless lives were lost. The equal of eighteen Akshaunis of armed forces had been completely destroyed. All the Kauravas were dead, barring Duryodhana. Bhima chased after Duhshasana, and killed him in a terrible duel. Then

he dipped his fingers into the entrails of the latter and drank his blood. Thus his oath was fulfilled.

Yuyutsa who had fought with the Pandavas went back to Hastinapura.

When the war had ended, Aswathama and Kripa went in search of Duryodhana. The latter had set off alone, and at last Sanjaya found him on the banks of a pool.

Duryodhana told Sanjaya to go back to Hastinapura and report to his father that he was still alive. When Sanjaya set out for home, he met Aswathama and Kripa, and directed them to the spot where he had seen Duryodhana.

In the meanwhile, the Pandavas began to search for Duryodhana, and at last came to the pool where he was hiding. Then Yudhishtira said, "Duryodhana, like a coward you hide here, after your entire race has been destroyed. Come out and fight. Unless you defeat us you cannot rule in peace."

Duryodhana replied in a dispirited voice, "I don't wish to rule. I want no territory. Take everything. It is all yours."





Yudhishthira replied, "Do you think we'll accept charity from you? Unless you defeat us, you cannot rest in peace. Come, battle against Bhima like a courageous warrior. Fight and perish or live like a craven coward."

Bhima also taunted Duryodhana on his poor showing as a warrior. Stung by these words, Duryodhana came out of the pool and fought with Bhima. The two adversaries pounded each other with their maces. At last Bhima clove Duryodhana's thigh into two with a powerful stroke of his mace, and the usurper died in great agony.

Aswathama, and Kripa found Duryodhana in this state and swore a terrible vengeance on the Pandavas. At night when all was quiet they crept into the Pandava tent and slew all the sleeping figures there. Dhrishtadyumna was foully murdered, the Upapandavas slain, and the tents were a heap of smouldering ruins when the assassins had ceased their foul deed.

The Pandavas were shocked at this calamity and it did not take them long to discover the identity of the murderers. Bhima and Arjuna got into their chariots and raced away in hot pursuit of the assailants. Bhima found Aswathama among the disciples of Sage Vyasa. For his part, Aswathama was horrified to find the Pandavas alive and well. Quickly he took out a barb named Brahmasironama and aimed it at the Pandavas. Arjuna fitted a similar arrow to his bow and shot it at Aswathama. The two flaming arrows collided in mid air and threatened to destroy everything around them. Then Sages Vyasa and Narada requested the two adversaries to recall their arrows. Arjuna promptly complied with the

request, but Aswathama could not recall his weapon. He confessed his failure to Sage Vyasa. Whereupon, Lord Krishna forced Aswathama to concede defeat and took away from him the solitary jewel in his hair which he gave to Arjuna. It was decided that the arrow shot by Aswathama would ultimately put an end to further additions to the Pandava race. Then the son of Drona went away to do penance in the forest.

In Hastinapura, Dhritarashtra grieved for his dead sons. Then Sanjaya said, "The cream of your race lies in the dust. All those who supported the Kauravas are also dead. We must perform the last rites for them."

Then Dhritarashtra, Gandhari and Kunti went to the field of Kurukshetra. The old King heard how Duryodhana had been killed by Bhima. His

heart seemed to burst with hatred. But pretending friendliness he declared ready he would embrace Bhima to show his good feelings. Lord Krishna who had an inkling of the blind King's mind cautioned Bhima to stay away and instead led the sorrowing monarch to an iron statue of Bhima placed there before hand.

Dhritarashtra touched the statue and thinking it was Bhima wrapped his arms round it and squeezed with all his might. The next instant the statue broke into several pieces.

Then Lord Krishna said, "Oh! King, you have destroyed only a statue of Bhima. He lives, and all your strength is now gone."

Dhritarashtra was ashamed of his conduct. Driving all rancour from his mind, he now blessed the Pandavas and called them his sons.





TEN LITTLE FAIRIES

One sunny day, long ago, ten little fairies were out for a walk. They came to a clearing they knew well. They were surprised to hear the sound of crying. Sitting on a stool in front of a cottage was a little girl. Tears were streaming down her face and she was crying loudly. "Good morning, little girl," they said. "Good morning, fairies," she replied, between her sobs. "Why are you crying?" the fairies asked. "Because I am bored and I don't know what to do," said the little girl and she told them that her mother could not play

with her and that she had no one else to play with. The fairies were very surprised at this. Then, just at that moment, there was a very sad sigh from inside the cottage. "What will happen to my daughter, who does not know what to do with her ten fingers? I have made myself ill doing all the work so that she had nothing to do."

The ten little fairies peeped into the cottage and saw a woman lying in bed. She looked very pale and worried. "This poor mother is very ill. Her daughter's laziness is

worrying her so much that she cannot get better. We must help her," they said. For a few moments the fairies were silent, while they thought about the problem. Then one of them said: "We must make her daughter do something. There are ten of us—we will hide in her fingers." Quickly they jumped on to the little girl's lap and she fell instantly asleep.

When she woke up her fingers moved by themselves. They set to work straight away. They picked up a needle and thread and sewed a torn dress and mended a split pocket. The little girl was very surprised to find herself doing these things. Happily she took the sewing to show her mother. Then she noticed that her mother's bed was very creased and rumpled. Immediately she set about making her mother comfortable. She plumped up the pillows and smoothed the sheets. Her mother was very surprised, but very pleased. Before she could say a single word, the little daughter said: "I think I'll go and get something for us to eat. You'll feel better then." Both the little girl and her mother enjoyed the lunch. After they had finished it the mother



turned to her daughter and said: "Thank you very much, you must have worked very hard."

"I liked doing it. Working is fun, it gives me something to do," said the little girl. The pots and pans were soon washed and polished. As she polished and swept, she sang. The sound of her voice and the way she was helping, made her mother feel better. The little girl's fingers seemed to work all on their own.

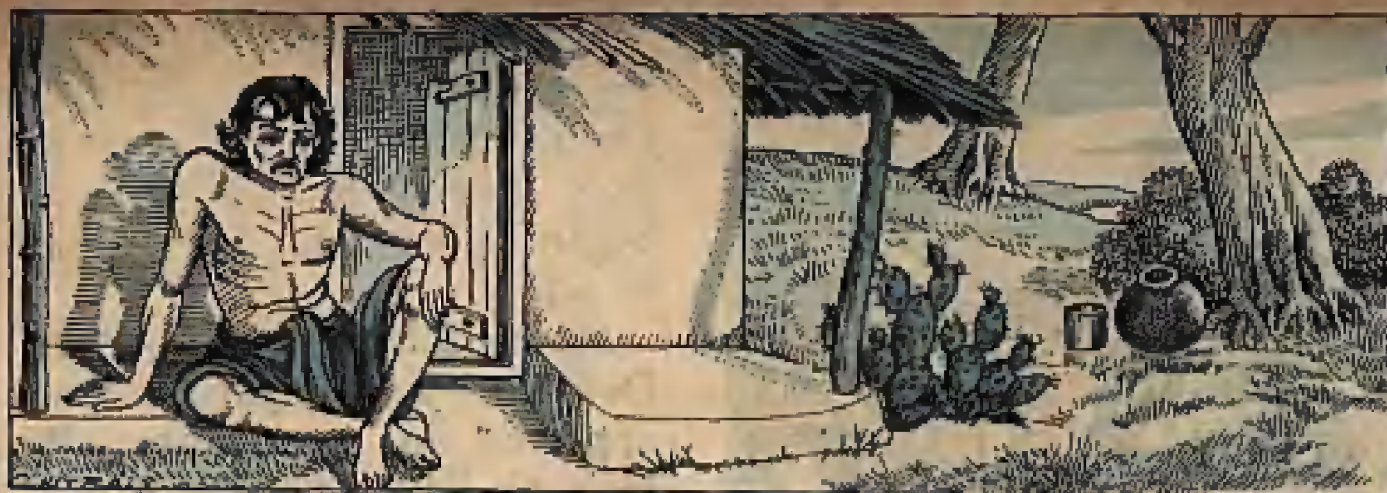
That night, for the very first time, the little girl felt really happy. She fell asleep as soon as her head touched the pillow.

One by one, the fairies crept

out of their hiding place and so pleased were they with their day's work that they began to dance. Dawn was breaking and, as they made their escape through the window, they passed sunbeams coming into the room.

The mother soon got better and from that day onwards she would often say with a smile: "My little girl has fairy fingers." If you had passed the cottage, you would have heard the little girl singing happily as she worked. Now that there were two of them working, the mother had time to play with the little girl, so she was never bored any more, thanks to the ten little fairies.





THE FALSE MENDICANT

Long ago there lived in a village a poor man named Dolu. Not finding a suitable job in that village, he set out from his home and reached the city of Andhapur whose people were steeped in superstitious beliefs.

Dolu, who was a crafty fellow decided to take advantage of the situation. He donned the garb of a holy man, and pitched a tent on the outskirts of the city. Soon news of the arrival of a holy man spread all over the town and people began to crowd around him.

The townspeople vied with one another in feting the false hermit, and Dolu who found this life quite pleasant moved into the temple. There he collected the money offered by the folks and arranged for two big

festivals. Actually he desired to collect more money and so he invited the village elders to a meeting where he declared pompously, "Friends, tomorrow is the holy night of Sivarathri. We must light a lakh of lamps in honour of the Lord. If you do this, you all will prosper."

The people thought this a good idea and went round collecting donations for this purpose.

Soon money began to pour in and Dolu's eyes glistened with greed at all the wealth. Came the day of the festival, and the folks turned up in large numbers. Amongst those who came was a man called Bolu. He was known as the village idiot as everybody believed that he had no intelli-



gence. But the truth was that Bolu was a simple fellow, who was not worried about displaying his mental powers before others. He was content to be regarded as a fool and never bothered to correct that impression.

When Dolu saw Bolu, he called the latter aside and pressing two rupees in his palms whispered some secret instructions. At once Bolu realised that the other was a fake, out to dupe the people. He decided to expose him at the right time.

That night the temple of Siva resounded with the rhythm of the drums and the luminous lamps cast long shadows on the ground. People were gathered

on the open ground in front of the temple. At a signal from Dolu, suddenly without warning Bolu leaped to his feet and began to sway crazily from side to side.

Seeing this Dolu said, "Oh! Devotees! Last night the Lord appeared in my dream. We seem to have offended Him in some way. We must seek a remedy." Here Dolu stopped and turning towards Bolu asked seriously, "Holy Sir, tell us where we have gone wrong. We'll do as you say."

People in those days believed that the Lord spoke through the spirit of men and willingly believed whatever the possessed man said. Dolu hoped to take advantage of this and he had tutored Bolu about what to say. He waited expectantly to hear what Bolu had to say.

Bolu, rolling his eyes from side to side, exclaimed, "Oh Dolu, you are indeed a true devotee. I have decided to invite you to Mount Kailas, my celestial abode. So make preparations for your journey instantly."

After saying this, Bolu rolled on the ground twice or thrice more and muttering some more words, suddenly regained his



feet and announced that the Lord had left him.

The gullible people of Andhapur really believed that the Lord had spoken to them and were truly happy that Dolu had been singled out for the honour of going up to heaven with his body intact. So they went off to dig a huge grave in order to bury Dolu alive.

When Dolu saw that his scheme had boomeranged upon him, he ran to Bolu and chided him. But all unheeding, Bolu and the village elders dragged Dolu to the edge of the hole and prepared to lower him down into it.

At this Dolu fell at Bolu's feet and implored him to save him. When the astonished

crowds pondered over the meaning of this, Bolu turned to them and said, "Friends, this man is a fake. He told me to act as though possessed by the Lord, and then instruct you to hand over all the money to him personally. I wanted to expose him. I wanted him to confess in public his misdeeds. So I pretended to be possessed and said that the Lord had commanded him to ascend to heaven. If I had told you before hand, you would not have believed me."

The folks looked at Dolu's face for confirmation of these words and read his guilt writ large there. They gave him a good beating and chased him away from their town.

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TIMELY ADVICE

Long ago the city of Kalapur was ruled by King Kaarmegha. He had a son named Gajamukha. He was a valiant prince who excelled in all the martial arts. Often he longed to display his prowess, but he was so closely guarded by the orders of a fond father that he could do nothing on his own.

One day the prince informed his father that he wished to travel and see the country over which he was to rule. The king said, "Right, you should travel and see things for yourself. But remember three things. Firstly, never go alone anywhere. Secondly, when you leave a place, mark its location well. Thirdly, when you travel through the forest be very careful of the bears. Don't provoke them. If a bear comes on your way, at once lie on the ground as if you were dead, and it will not harm you."

Gajamukha set out on his travels, but much to his annoyance, the king ordered some bodyguards to accompany him. He could not help it. But he did not take the king's advices seriously.

Gajamukha and his attendants reached a dense forest, and the prince desired to go hunting alone. He was irked by the guards who were constantly advising him against entering the forest and told them, "Listen, men! Go and see for yourself how safe the path is. Then I will decide whether or not I should go into the forest."

So the two guards left the prince alone and went to spy on the land. As soon as they had disappeared from view, Gajamukha plunged into the dense forest in search of some prey and was soon thrilled by the sight of a tiger which charged him with a booming roar. As

the prince was looking for just such an opportunity, he drew out his sword and attacked the tiger. Ultimately, his sword pierced the heart of the beast and it rolled over, dead. Elated at this victory, the prince thought that he was capable of tackling any danger all by himself. Of what use were the bodyguards?

When he had gone some distance into the forest he heard sharp growls and taking a turn, he saw three fierce looking bears advancing towards him. Quickly he put his hand to his sword and discovered to his dismay that he had left it behind at the spot where he had

rested after killing the tiger. Then he suddenly remembered his father's injunction and promptly lying prostrate on the ground held his breath. It seemed a long time during which the bears came up, sniffed him and went away without harming him. After they had gone, the Prince got up and retraced his steps to where he had left his sword. Picking up the sword he went back further to meet his guards. But they were not to be seen, as they had gone off in search of the prince.

Gajamukha set out alone and came to a stream. Dusty and weary after his struggle with the tiger, he decided to





bathe, and leaving his clothes on the bank plunged into the stream.

When he emerged from his bath, he saw to his annoyance that someone had taken away his clothes. He looked around but could see nobody. When he looked up he saw several monkeys chattering excitedly. They waved the clothes they had lifted from the ground. Gajamukha realised that if his guards were there this would not have happened. At last he

began throwing stones at the monkeys and they imitating his action, threw back the clothes at him. When the prince picked them up, he saw that they were in shreds. But there was no help to it. Donning the torn raiments he set out to search for his guards. Just then they came to the stream and the prince was reunited with them.

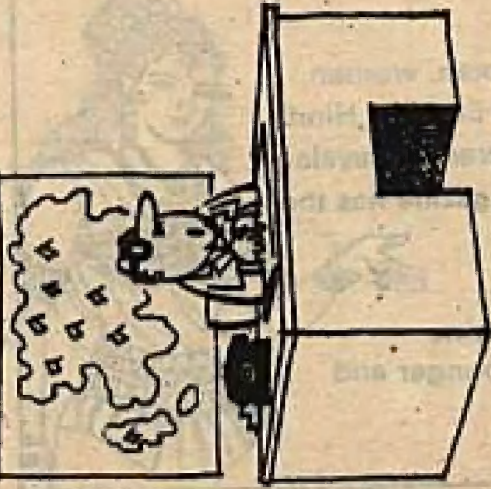
But the prince had learnt his lesson and from on that day he listened to his father carefully and obeyed him.

WHAT'S YOUR SCORE?

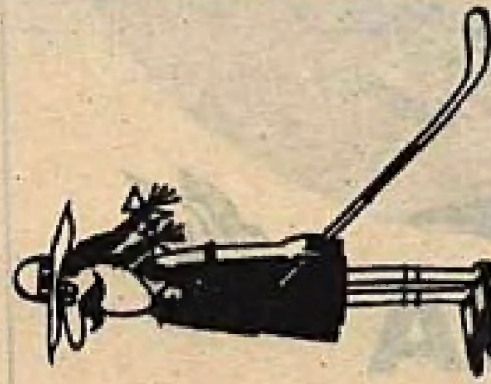
ANSWERS

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Havana | 9. 26th January 1952 |
| 2. In Calcutta | 10. John F. Kennedy Airport |
| 3. Punjab | 11. Sir Isaac Newton |
| 4. Norway | 12. L.E. Waterman U.S.A. In 1884 |
| 5. Korea | 13. Graft Ferdinand Von Zeppelin (1898) Germany |
| 6. American Museum of Natural History in New York | 14. Dhyan Chand |
| 7. Statue of Motherland — USSR | 15. Brabourne Stadium |
| 8. Atlantic Sailfish—78-80 K.M. per hour | |

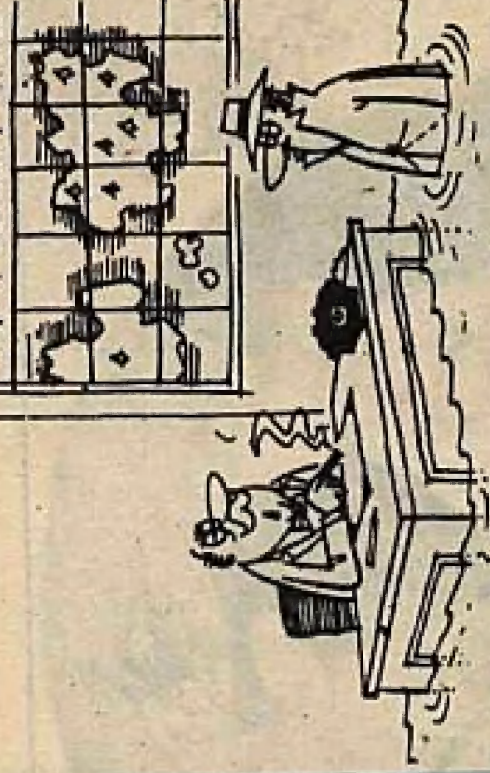
M.I.9. SECRET SERVICE



"A very good disguise, Carruthers, but for one small detail..."

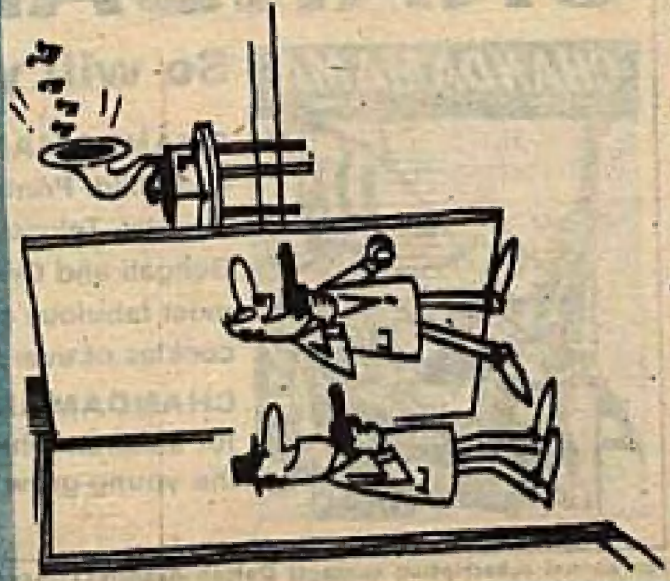


M.I.9. SECURITY BRANCH

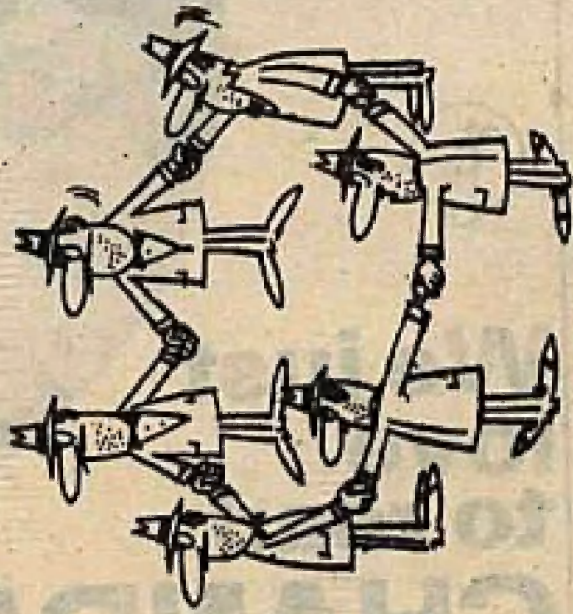


"Confidentially, Carruthers—we think there's a leak in our organisation!"

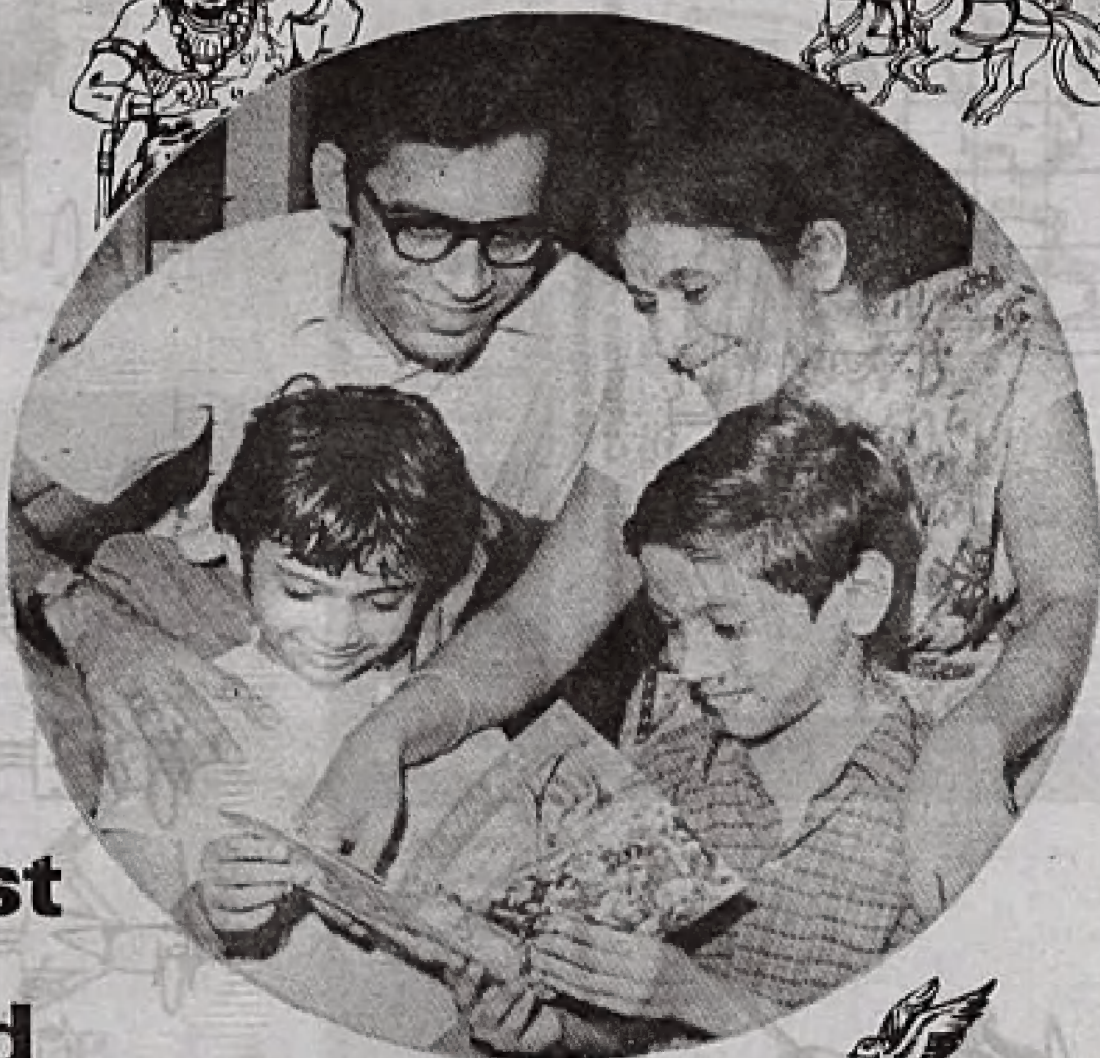
LAUGH WITH FIDDY



"Well, it looks as though we've uncovered the spy ring, Carruthers!"



"You fool, old! There's an enemy agent in your false beard!"



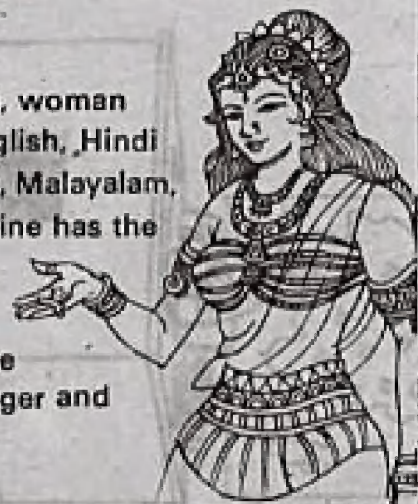
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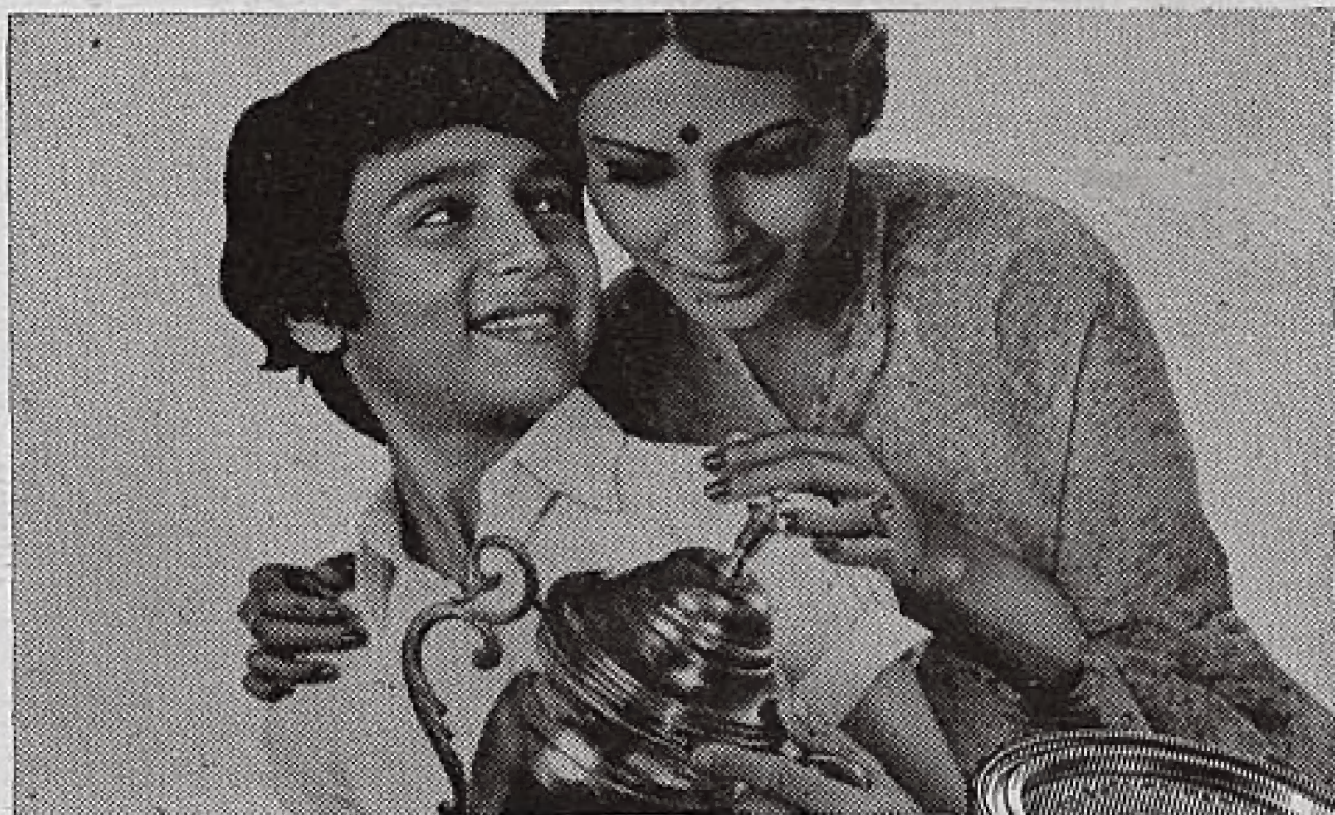


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